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NUMBER 1.

"The Mystery of the Kingdom."

The mystery of the kingdom lies
In this that Christ hath died for me;
But see in that great sacrifice,
The other truth, "I died for thee."
The life, on bleeding Calvary given,
Taught us the way our life to save.
All truth all good, and God and heaven
Are found in giving all we have.
We give up all, and all resume;
We die the death, and life is born;
Without the shadows of the tomb.
There comes no resurrection morn.
Down to the grave, then let us haste,
By toiling, suffering, bleeding, giving;
'Tis only thus our souls can taste
The risen bliss of heavenly living.
—Prof. Upham.

Various Exhortations.

Written by Polycarp, a disciple of St. John and burned at the stake after being a Christian 86 years.

"But the love of money is the root of all evils." Knowing therefore, that "as we brought nothing into the world, so we can carry nothing out," let us arm ourselves with the armour of righteousness; and let us teach, first of all, ourselves to walk in the commandments of the Lord. Next teach your wives [to walk] in the faith given to them, and in love and purity tenderly loving their own husbands in all truth, and loving all [others] equally in all chastity; and to train up their children in the knowledge and fear of God. Teach the widows to be discreet as respects the faith of the Lord, praying continually for all, being far from all slandering, evil-speaking, false-witnessing, love of money, and every kind of evil; knowing that they are the altar of God, that he clearly perceives all things, and that nothing is hid from him, neither reasonings nor reflections, nor any one of the secret things of the heart.

"My Church."

"Upon this rock I will build my church" says the Lord. The word *my* is not used by accident. It is an essential part of the blessed declaration. The Church is Christ's special property, and the object of his tenderest love. The relationship which exists between Christ and his church is vital. It may be some farm laborer, whose name is on no church book of earth, but is written in heaven, or it may be some servant girl who hardly ever spoke to a minister in her life, but who holds communion with God; but Christ declares that the union between him and them is so vital that a man had better have a millstone tied about his neck, and be cast into the depths of the sea, than do them harm. This relationship is constantly kept before us by the sacred writers. If they speak of the church as a flock, Christ is the shepherd. If they speak of it as a kingdom, he is the king. If they speak of it as a bride, he is the Royal Husband. If they speak of it as a body, he is the Head, giving it vitality and guidance.

This marvelous union exists not only between Christ and his people, but it extends to every member. It is said that "blood is thicker than water"—yes, and thank God grace is thicker than

views and interpretations and creeds. Denominationalism brings men together, but grace makes them one forever. The church of Christ is composed of those who may not be united with any church on earth. As an old brother once said, "we shall be surprised to see some in heaven that we never expected would be there; then there would be some absent we surely expected to see there; and then the greatest wonder of all will be that we are there ourselves." "To as many as received him, to them gave he the power, the privilege of becoming the sons of God, even to as many as believed on his name.

Jesus says "I will build my church." It is a building, or rather likened to one, so we read of stones, workmen, house and temple. Of this glorious structure it had been foretold by Zachariah that Christ should be the Builder. Yes, he is the great Architect, the Wise Master Builder, and "in his hand all the building, fitly framed together, growing into a holy temple of the Lord." It is this which distinguishes Christ's church from all material, denominational or national churches. Material churches, however magnificent, are built by men, denominational churches are formed by councils and conferences; national churches are set up by rulers and kings; but Christ's church is his own workmanship, and will ever be a monument of his wisdom and power.

It is his privilege and prerogative to prepare the material of which the building is composed. By nature man is entirely unfit to enter into the building. Man is sinful, polluted and depraved. No matter in what capacity or position man is found, without a preparation he is not fit for the temple of Jehovah. Here then is a problem—a dead world out of which to manufacture an everlasting temple—a world of sinners out of which to make a world of saints. Can man or angels accomplish this? Alas, no! Man can as soon make a world as make a Christian. I know there are those who say that it can be done by ordained fingers applying consecrated water to the forehead of the slumbering babe. We can make Methodists, Baptists, Quakers, Presbyterians, Dunkards or Episcopalians, but only God can make Christians. This great work Jesus undertakes to do. He says, "all power in heaven and earth is given unto me, and I will build my church." There is no obstacle that Jesus cannot overcome and remove. The church is his workmanship. A moment's glance will show it. Let us, for our instruction and encouragement, walk about Zion and consider it. We shall see that every stone is bright with the glory of God.

E. MASON.

An opportunity is like a pin in the sweepings; you catch sight of it just as it flies away from you and gets buried again.—Mrs. Whitney.

Things in General—Some Things in Particular.

Our Home Work.—I had neglected to notice the baptism of a young man, one of our Sunday School boys. Trust he may develop into a noble worker for Christ. Our congregations are very good. On the whole I believe there is good solid progress. We are under heavy expenses, yet we have held our own. "The Church of God," with one hundred and sixty members, were, at their last meeting, behind over three hundred dollars. Our expenses taking all things with consideration, is greater than theirs. This comparison is not used to cast reflection on our good brethren, but to show that we are doing more than living. Am sorry to report the continual absence of sister E. L. Roberts, owing to physical trouble, but trust she may soon be with us; also Sister Cassel, who has been ill since last January. Truly she has had a siege, but health is coming back, slow, but then it may be sure. Bro. and Sister Sands lost a daughter. Death is sad, especially so when a mother leaves little ones behind. But God is both a Father and Mother.

"The Gospel According to Jesus."—I have received a copy of Brother Mason's book, and have read it with much pleasure. The writer has expressed his views in an easy flowing manner, without Masonic force. The point is easy to grasp and if you do not agree with the writer you feel that he gives you the privilege of drawing your own conclusions, and will think just as much of you. The book is neatly bound, well printed, and should be read. I would like to see the edition exhausted. Our church has not, as a general thing, sustained literature, and never will accomplish all she can accomplish, until more printing presses are in use. If any one would like to secure a copy of Bro. Mason's book without money, write to the Tract Society, and they will put you in the way of getting a copy. But you had better order direct from Bro. Mason and give him all there is in it.

Christmas an Advertisement for Christ.—Christmas costumes, Gifts, &c., advertise Christ. They keep in the world's mind, the fact, that in the past there was a man born to whom all these things point, and getting the thoughts of men in that direction they are getting in a position to know who Christ is. But while this is so, I cannot help but think that Christmas, like many good costumes, is much abused. In the bestowing of gifts, how frivolous and thoughtless some people are, and in the teaching of children how indifferent some are. If the money spent in the church at large for Christmas gifts had been spent in the College or some other good enterprise, how much good would it have done, and then, it would have lived on after the giver had gone the way of all the earth. Christmas should be enjoyed and all the good done possible for Christ's sake, but neither should body,

mind, nor business be abused in the bestowing of gifts.

Good Common Sense.—A young man and woman were married. I was called upon to marry them, but illness prevented. I wrote them a letter containing some advice. The young man was a so-called conservative and the young lady a so-called progressive; the conservative was progressive enough and the progressive was conservative enough to make a good team. In a very kind letter they say: "In the new life upon which we both have entered we feel that we have much to learn. So far we have been getting along splendidly. We agreed some time ago to never let our little differences in belief make any unpleasantness between us and I believe by trying we can keep to our own row, he to his and I to mine." The trouble so often is they stop trying, and allowing outside influences to interfere, there is a clash. My two children in the above extract have hit the secret, and if they keep on trying they will both ride after while, in the same boat, and I trust, after passing through the storms of time, may reach the peaceful harbor of heaven.

A Minister for Waynesboro, Pa.—The town of Waynesboro is a live progressive town, the inhabitants intelligent and social. When visiting the place I was struck with their hospitality. The churches had no denominational smell, and yet I believe they were true to their convictions. We have some good live members in the place, doing all the good they can, but their influence is scattered, and does not tell like it would if brought to a focus. We need a church in the town of Waynesboro. From what I know, I believe in one year there could be gathered a good congregation, and a number of members. That church would need a minister who had the confidence of the people, who had the cause at heart, and who like one of old, loved his fellow man, and I have no doubt but that Bro. John Gehr is the man. His membership is in the church of Washington county, Md., and I suggest that the brethren in council assembled, see to it that the work takes shape, and the church by her influence back up the work. The seed is there, it only needs development.

She Died in the Faith.—Bro. Wm. F. Rippetto, near Port Republic, Va., writes me of death of Maggie Beahm. I knew the sister well, and was hurt to hear the news. Maggie was a consistent christian. I think our brother's words put the facts better than I could, hence I take the following extract from his letter: "I am sorry to say at this writing sister Kate is very much afflicted. Her disease seems to be a general prostration of the nerves. She contracted a cold by waiting upon a dear sister in Christ, whom it has pleased the good Lord to take from our midst, one of your good friends, Maggie Beam. She died the 12th, last Friday. She was

an exception, gentle and mild, loved by all who knew her. She was baptized and joined the Brethren church, Jan. 19, 1884, and was consistent in her walks of life from first entering Christ until her death. Whilst she was scoffed and cramped by "subjects" incarnate she bore up under all, and whipped back the "emissaries" with the sword of the righteous. Whilst upon her death bed with brain clear—to my wife who was by her bed side constantly every night and part of the day nursing and consoling until she fell asleep—she spoke calmly of her resignation of this life, and said if it was the Lord's will that she should die she was ready and willing to go and passed away having a hope of the life in the home beyond. She died with typhoid fever, aged 21 years, 4 months, and 24 days."

When the lines are read we shall be rushing along in the new year. The past has gone, the future is before us, the present only is ours, wisely using it, we may accomplish the object of our creation. I wish you all a happy and profitable year.

JOHN DUKE McFADEN.

Miami Valley Items.

The last week all the churches have been very busy preparing for their Christmas entertainments.

The Pleasant Hill, Little York, Miamisburg, Farmersville and Winchester churches made themselves very prominent. This shows there is life here.

I was invited to so many, that I was really sorry I could not be with them all. The Miamisburg was all that I had the pleasure of visiting.

There they had quite a substantial treat for the Sunday School scholars, and all that came were treated, and still there was abundance left.

The Miamisburg church had nothing but a plain simple treat. The presents consisting of candy, oranges, apples and appropriate books were displayed on a large table, and a few bunches of evergreens here and there to give it a Christmas appearance, were all the decorations. A speech by the writer on how Christmas is kept in England and Wales, and singing and prayer were the program. Everybody enjoyed themselves and went away happy.

We heard all the other churches also had a good time, and were encouraged by the good opinions the different communities had of them.

On January 12th, I leave for Nappanee, Ind., to hold a few weeks' meetings. Wife and children expect to accompany me, so that we will not be liable to the terrible malady of anxiety and homesickness which has murdered so many good meetings.

EDWARD MASON.

There is no use of life but just to find out what it is fit for us to do, and, doing it, it seems to be a little matter whether we live or die in it. God does not want our work, but our willingness to work.—Hawthorne.